

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

10

CONVENTION OF MINISTERS

OF WORCESTER COUNTY, 1837,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

SLAVERY;

HELD AT WORCESTER,

DECEMBER 5 & 6, 1837, AND JANUARY 16, 1838.

WORCESTER :
MASSACHUSETTS SPY OFFICE,
1838.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION AT ITS FIRST MEETING.

At a Convention of Ministers of the Gospel, of the several denominations in the County of Worcester, held at Worcester, agreeably to the invitation of fourteen of the number,* on Tuesday, Dec. 5th, 1837, for the purpose of expressing their sentiments on the subject of Slavery, the following members were appointed OFFICERS of the Convention :

JOHN FISKE of *New Braintree*, PRESIDENT.

THOMAS SNELL, <i>North Brookfield</i> , JOSEPH ALLEN, <i>Northborough</i> , GEORGE WATERS, <i>Holden</i> , THOMAS W. TUCKER, <i>Oxford</i> ,	}	V. PRESIDENTS.
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JOSEPH S. CLARK, <i>Sturbridge</i> , SAMUEL MAY, <i>Leicester</i> , JAMES PORTER, <i>Worcester</i> ,	}	Secretaries.
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The President of the Convention, in accepting the office, made a brief statement of the origin of the call of the Convention.

Prayer was offered by Dr. Snell of North Brookfield.

* Subjoined is a copy of the invitation, as published in the newspapers of the day.

NOTICE. At a meeting of the subscribers, held at Leicester, Oct. 30, 1837, it was voted unanimously, as the sense of the meeting, that it is expedient to call a Convention of all Ministers of the Gospel in the County of Worcester, to meet at Worcester, in Brinley Hall, on the *first Tuesday in December next*, at 11 o'clock, A. M., to express their sentiments on the subject of SLAVERY ; and, accordingly, all Ministers of the Gospel in said County are hereby requested to meet as aforesaid.

JOHN FISKE.
 THOMAS SNELL.
 JOHN NELSON.
 JOSEPH CLARKE.
 SETH ALDEN.
 GEORGE ALLEN.
 ISAAC R. BARBOUR

LEVI PACKARD.
 JOHN GREENE.
 JAMES PORTER.
 SAMUEL MAY.
 DAVID PEABODY.
 WINTHROP MORSE.
 J. S. CLARK.

The following gentlemen were appointed a Committee to prepare business for the Convention :

George Allen of Shrewsbury, Alonzo Hill of Worcester, John Nelson of Leicester, William P. Paine of Holden, Winthrop Morse of East Brookfield, and David Peabody of Worcester.

Mr. Peabody, from the Committee on business, reported Rules for the regulation of the proceedings of the Convention, as follows :

1. That every session of this body be opened with prayer.
2. That no member of this body speak more than fifteen minutes at a time, nor more than twice on the same question, without permission of the Convention.
3. That the discussion of all questions be confined to members of the Convention.
4. That all business, which is to come before the Convention, be prepared and reported by the Committee appointed for that purpose.
5. That, in all other respects, this body observe the same rules ordinarily observed by deliberative assemblies.

The above Rules were adopted unanimously.

Adjourned to 2 o'clock, P. M.

Two o'clock, P. M. The Convention met, according to adjournment. The session of the afternoon was opened with prayer, by Mr. Demond of Princeton.

The Committee on business came in and made a Report, in part, by their Chairman.

After the reading thereof, Mr. Hill of Worcester, one of the Committee, declared his dissent therefrom, and offered a Resolution as the Report of the minority of the Committee.

Moved, and seconded, that the Report of the majority be accepted. After a protracted debate, it was

Voted, That the Report be re-committed.

Voted, That three be added to the Committee, viz :

Thomas Snell of North Brookfield, Joseph S. Clark of Sturbridge, and Jonathan E. Woodbridge of Worcester.

Voted, That when we adjourn, we adjourn to meet again at 7 o'clock, this evening. Adjourned.

Seven o'clock, P. M. The Convention met, according to adjournment. Prayer was offered by Mr. Bardwell of Oxford.

Mr. Peabody, from the Committee on business, reported the following Resolution :

"Whereas the subject of Slavery is of sufficient importance to render it desirable that correct opinion and right feeling respecting it should prevail among our citizens; it should be our purpose to use all judicious means to promote such opinion and feeling among our people,—not forgetting that the same measures cannot be wisely adopted in all places, and cheerfully according to each brother the prerogative of judging what means can be wisely used in the place where God has called him to labor."

After debate, it was

Voted, That the Resolution be accepted.

Mr. Nelson, from the Committee on business, reported a Resolution, which was debated during the remainder of the evening session.

Voted, That when the Convention adjourn, it be to half-past 8 o'clock, to-morrow morning. Adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 6.

Half-past 8 o'clock, A. M. The Convention met according to adjournment.

Prayer was offered by Mr. Allen of Northborough.

The records of the preceding day were then read. The discussion of the preceding evening was then resumed.

The main question was called for, and, on being taken, was decided in the affirmative, one member only voting in the negative.

Mr. Porter of Worcester, the member voting in the negative, requested to have his name recorded in connexion with the vote.

The Preamble and Resolutions, as amended and adopted by the Convention, are as follows :

Believing that the holding of men in Slavery, the selling of men, or the treating of them as "goods and chattels," is contrary to the principles and

precepts of the Christian religion, and ought to be universally abandoned ;—
 Believing, also, that the withholding of the Bible from any portion of the human family, the hindering of them from learning to read and from searching the Scriptures, is offensive to God and dangerous to the souls of men ;—

Resolved, That we will, in all suitable ways, use our influence and exertions to promote abstinence from the abovementioned evils throughout the world.

Resolved, That we invite all our brethren, the Ministers of the Gospel, to unite with us in this Declaration.

The Committee on business came in and reported, through their Chairman, Mr. Allen of Shrewsbury, a Declaration of Sentiments on the subject of American Slavery.

Mr. Hill presented certain Resolutions as the Report of the minority of the Committee, (that minority consisting of two.)

Moved and seconded, that the Report of the majority be accepted. This motion was debated until the hour of adjournment. On motion,

Voted, That the Convention adjourn to 2 o'clock, P. M.

Two o'clock, P. M. The Convention met, according to adjournment. Prayer was offered by Rev. J. S. Clark of Sturbridge.

The Convention was informed, by Mr. Peabody of Worcester, that the expenses incurred for the use of the Hall, in which the meetings of the Convention have been held, [Brinley Hall,] had been defrayed by several individuals resident in Worcester ;—whereupon it was

Voted, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to those individuals for their liberality ; and that the Secretaries of the Convention transmit to them a copy of this vote.

The discussion of the morning was resumed and continued.

Voted, That the Reports, both of the majority and of the minority of the Committee, be indefinitely postponed.

On motion of Mr. Allen of Shrewsbury—which was seconded,

Voted, That a Committee be now appointed, whose duty it shall be to prepare business for an adjourned meeting of this Convention, and also to appoint the time for said meeting—to be held as soon after the first of January next, as shall be found practicable.

Voted, That the President and Vice Presidents of the Convention, be a Committee to nominate the Committee provided for in the foregoing vote.

Voted, That said Committee consist of eleven.

The Committee of nomination made a report, nominating the Committee of eleven, as follows :

David Peabody of Worcester, Cyrus P. Grosvenor of Sterling, Levi Packard of Spencer, John Boardman of E. Douglas, Joseph Allen of Northboro', J. D. Farnsworth of Paxton, T. W. Tucker of Oxford, George Waters of Holden, C. B. Kirtledge, of Westborough, Samuel May of Leicester, and S. G. Buckingham of Millbury.

Voted, That this nomination be accepted.

Voted, To adjourn.

JOSEPH S. CLARK,	} <i>Secretaries.</i>
SAMUEL MAY,	
JAMES PORTER,	

NAMES AND RESIDENCES

OF THE

MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION.

Seth Alden,	Brookfield.
Jonathan Aldrich,	Worcester.
George Allen,	Shrewsbury.
Joseph Allen,	Northborough.
†Isaac Allen,	Bolton.
Aaron Bancroft,	Worcester.
Isaac R. Barbour,	Charlton.
Horatio Bardwell,	Oxford.
N. Beach,	Millbury.
John Boardman,	East Douglas.
Job B. Boomer,	Sutton.
Samuel G. Buckingham,	Millbury.
Michael Burdett,	South Northbridge.

†Mason Ball,
 †Caleb Brown,
 Eber Carpenter.
 Joseph S. Clark,
 Josiah Clark,
 Otis Converse,
 Moses Curtis,
 Sewell S. Cutting,
 †Samuel Clarke,
 †R. Carver,
 †W. S. Campbell,
 *John S. Davenport,
 Elnathan Davis,
 Elijah Demond,
 A. Dewey,
 William Eaton,
 C. B. Elliott,
 Brown Emerson,
 Daniel H. Emerson,
 Jonathan L. Estey,
 James D. Farnsworth,
 Samuel A. Fay,
 George Fisher,
 John Fiske,
 Walter Follett,
 Charles Forbush,
 Joseph Goffe,
 George Goodyear,
 John Greene,
 Cyrus P. Grosvenor,
 David A. Grosvenor,
 Samuel Henry,
 Alonzo Hill,
 David Holman,
 Francis Horton,
 †Nelson B. Jones,
 James Kimball,
 Charles B. Kittredge,
 Sumner Lincoln,
 †David R. Lamson,
 †A. Smith Lyon,
 †Richard Livesey,
 Cyrus Mann,
 Samuel May,

Princeton.
 Westminster.
 Southbridge.
 Sturbridge.
 Rutland.
 Westborough.
 Hardwick.
 Southbridge.
 Uxbridge.
 Berlin.
 Millbury.
 Bolton.
 Holden.
 Princeton.
 Storrsville.
 Hardwick.
 Millbury.
 West Boylston.
 Northborough.
 Worcester.
 Paxton.
 Barre.
 Harvard.
 New Braintree.
 Dudley.
 Northbridge.
 Millbury.
 Mendon.
 Leicester.
 Sterling.
 Uxbridge.
 Sturbridge.
 Worcester.
 Douglas.
 Brookfield, W. Par.
 Hardwick.
 Oakham.
 Westborough.
 Gardner.
 Berlin.
 North Oxford.
 Winchendon.
 Westminster.
 Leicester.

Rodney A. Miller,
 Winthrop Morse,
 John Nelson,
 Peter Osgood,
 Levi Packard,
 William P. Paine,
 Charles H. Peabody,
 David Peabody,
 James Porter,
 M. G. Pratt,
 †William H. Richards,
 Lewis Sabin,
 William H. Sanford,
 C. Shumway,
 Ethan Smith,
 Thomas Snell,
 *Thomas R. Sullivan,
 †Abisha Samson,
 †Micah Stone,
 †Nathaniel Thayer,
 H. A. Tracy,
 Leonard Tracy,
 George Trask,
 Thomas W. Tucker,
 John Walker,
 George Waters,
 John Wilde,
 Benjamin Wood,
 J. E. Woodbridge,
 Richard Woodruff,
 †Moses Winch,
 Luther Wright,

Worcester.
 E. Brookfield.
 Leicester.
 Sterling.
 Spencer.
 Holden.
 Sutton.
 Worcester.
 Worcester.
 Auburn.
 North Uxbridge.
 Templeton.
 Boylston.
 Petersham.
 Boylston.
 North Brookfield.
 Worcester.
 Southborough.
 Brookfield.
 Lancaster.
 Sutton.
 West Boylston.
 Warren.
 Oxford.
 Barre.
 Holden.
 Grafton.
 Upton.
 Worcester.
 Brookfield.
 Princeton.
 Leicester.

WHOLE NUMBER, 89.

* J. S. Davenport and T. R. Sullivan withdrew from the Convention, and requested that their names might be removed from the roll.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION AT ITS SECOND MEETING.

The Convention re-assembled in Worcester on Tuesday, the 16th day of January, 1838, in conformity with the call* of their Committee appointed at the close of the former meeting of the Convention.

The Convention was called to order, by the President, at 10 1-2 o'clock, A. M. Prayer was offered by Dr. Bancroft of Worcester.

Mr. Porter of Worcester, at his request, was excused from acting longer as one of the Secretaries.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller of Worcester, and seconded, that none but ordained Ministers be admitted to vote in the Convention; and the vote being taken, it was decided in the negative, on the ground that it would exclude many licensed preachers of the Methodist denomination.

A letter to the Convention, from Ethan Smith of Boylston, a member of the Convention, but necessarily absent from the present meeting, was then read.

The Records of the former meeting of the Convention were then read, and after being amended in two several instances, were accepted.

* Subjoined is a copy of the call, as published in the newspapers of the day :

CONVENTION OF MINISTERS. The Committee appointed by the Convention of Ministers in Worcester County, on the subject of Slavery, to prepare business to present at an adjourned meeting of that body, and also to appoint the time of that meeting, having attended to the duty assigned them, appoint **TUESDAY, January 16th**, at 10 o'clock, and do cordially invite all Ministers in the County to attend this meeting, at Brinley Hall in Worcester, punctually, at the above named time. The *early* hour of 10 o'clock is appointed with the expectation that the Convention will sit but one day.

D. PEARBODY.

THOMAS W. TUCKER.

C. P. GROSVENOR.

GEORGE WATERS.

J. BOARDMAN.

SAMUEL MAY.

JOSEPH ALLEN.

LEVI PACKARD.

J. D. FARNSWORTH.

S. G. BUCKINGHAM.

Worcester, Dec. 26, 1837.

Messrs. Cutting of Southbridge, and Miller of Worcester, entered a protest against the record of the Resolution, on the 6th page, "That we invite all our brethren, the Ministers of the Gospel, to unite with us, in this Declaration."

The names* of fourteen gentlemen, not present at the former meeting of the Convention, were then presented and enrolled, together with that of Mr. Sullivan, who, having withdrawn his name, desired that it might be restored.

The Report of the Committee, appointed at the close of the former meeting, and at whose call the Convention had re-assembled, was then read by Mr. Peabody, the Chairman.

Moved, by Mr. Clark of Rutland, and seconded by Mr. Grosvenor of Uxbridge, that the report of the Committee be accepted.

This motion was debated during the remainder of the morning session ; when it was

Voted, That the Convention adjourn to 2 o'clock, P. M.

Two o'clock, P. M. The Convention met, agreeably to adjournment. Prayer was offered by Mr. Nelson of Leicester.

The discussion of the morning, in reference to the acceptance of the Report, was then resumed and continued through the afternoon, when a considerable number of gentlemen having spoken on both sides, there was a loud and general call for the question ; and it was

Voted, That the main question be now taken by Yeas and Nays. And the question being put on the motion to accept the Report, it was decided in the affirmative as follows :

YEAS—George Allen, Joseph Allen, Isaac R. Barbour, Horatio Bardwell, N. Beach, John Boardman, Samuel G. Buckingham, Michael Burdett, Joseph S. Clark, Josiah Clark, Elnathan Davis, Elijah Demond, William Eaton, C. B. Elliott, Brown Emerson, Daniel H. Emerson, Jonathan L. Estey, James D. Farnsworth, George Fisher, John Fiske, Charles Forbush, Joseph Goffe, George Goodyear, John Greene, Cyrus P. Grosvenor, David A. Grosvenor, Samuel Henry, James

* These names are distinguished thus (†) on the general roll

Kimball, Sumner Lincoln, Samuel May, Winthrop Morse, John Nelson, Levi Packard, William P. Paine, Charles H. Peabody, David Peabody, James Porter, William H. Sanford, C. Shumway, Ethan Smith, Thomas Snell, Leonard Tracy, George Trask, Thomas W. Tucker, George Waters, John Wilde, Richard Woodruff, Micah Stone, R. Carver, William H. Richards, David R. Lamson, Nelson B. Jones, W. S. Campbell, Mason Ball, Caleb Brown, Richard Livesey, Moses Winch—57.

NAYS—Jonathan Aldrich, Aaron Bancroft, Eber Carpenter, Sewall S. Cutting, Samuel Clarke, Francis Horton, David Holman, Alonzo Hill, Rodney A. Miller, M. G. Pratt, Thomas R. Sullivan, Jonathan E. Woodbridge, Nathaniel Thayer, Isaac Allen, A. Smith Lyon—15.

Francis Horton subsequently desired that his name, for reasons stated, might be changed from the Nays to the Yeas, which gave YEAS, 58—NAYS, 14.

A remonstrance to the action of the Convention, signed by Dr. Bancroft of Worcester, and eleven others, was then entered.

Mr. Clark of Rutland, informed the Convention that the expenses incurred for the use of the Hall during the present session of the Convention, had been defrayed by gentlemen resident in Worcester. Whereupon it was

Voted, That the thanks of the Convention be presented to those gentlemen for their liberality, and that a copy of this vote be communicated to them by the Secretaries.

Voted, That the Records of the Convention, with the Report of the Committee and the Remonstrance of certain members, be printed in pamphlet form.

Voted, That the Secretaries of the Convention, with Messrs. Grosvenor of Sterling, and Peabody of Worcester, be a Publishing Committee.

Voted, That any members of the Convention, absent from the present meeting, have liberty to add their names to the Report as adopted, or to the Remonstrance.

Voted, That the Convention do now adjourn, *sine die*.

Adjourned, at 5 1-4 o'clock, P. M.

JOHN FISKE, *President*.

JOSEPH S. CLARK, }
SAMUEL MAY, } *Secretaries*.

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS.

WE, the undersigned, Ministers of Jesus Christ in the County of Worcester and State of Massachusetts, assembled in Convention in the town of Worcester, on this 16th day of Jan., A. D. 1838, do, in this public and solemn manner, declare our sentiments on the subject of American Slavery.

As **MEN**, we cannot be indifferent to human wrongs and human woes, wherever they exist; and our very nature would prompt us, to the utmost limit of our power, to administer relief for the one, and seek redress for the other. As **CHRISTIANS**, we cannot conceal the deep grief of our hearts, that any portion of the human family,—our brethren by the common blood of nature and of redemption,—especially when dwelling by our side, and surrounded by the institutions of a religion which knows no respect of persons,—should be systematically shut out, as by a wall of adamant, from its elevating and ennobling influences, and bound down to a state of intellectual, moral, and spiritual degradation. As **MINISTERS** of **HIM** who was “sent to bind up the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bound,”* acting under a commission which contemplates the instruction of “every creature,” we cannot forbear, on all proper occasions, individually or collectively, to proclaim those doctrines and inculcate those principles of our religion, which are designed to destroy every form of sin, and sweep away every vestige of oppression.

We declare, at this time, our sentiments on the subject of Slavery—not to denounce any class of our countrymen, as sinners above all men in the sight of **HIM** who searcheth the heart;

* Comp. Isa. 61: 1 with Luke 4: 18.

but that we may, by expressing our solemn convictions, and at the same time exhibiting the ground of immutable truth and justice, on which, as we conceive, they are based, arrest attention, awaken interest, arouse the public conscience at the North and the South ; and thus, as far as in us lies, bring into action a train of holy influences, which, with the blessing of Almighty God, shall result in the total removal of this evil from our land. We do it, as a duty which we owe to ourselves, to our posterity, to our churches, to the Christian name, to all both bond and free in our land, and to the Master whom we serve. We do it, because we are expressly required to “remember them that are in bonds as bound with them ;” because we would “do good unto all men as we have opportunity ;” because we love our country, and would save it from the operation of those causes which are visibly working its ruin ; and because we would avert from the nation the judgments of an avenging God.

Regarding Slavery as an institution having moral and religious relations of the deepest importance, we claim the liberty, as we feel the obligation, to declare our sentiments concerning it, with the utmost freedom and boldness, yet with Christian courtesy and love. In forming our judgment of its character, we might refer to that law written on the heart by the finger of God, which asserts, in every man’s consciousness, that he has a *right* to *himself*, to the *use of his own powers*, and to the *products of his own labor*, which cannot be rightfully annulled. This we hold to be a principle evident in the light of reason ; and the violation of it, to be a palpable *moral wrong*. But we would rather refer to the Oracles of Inspired Truth. We would abide by the Law and the Testimony of God, and submit to stand or fall by their decision. We find, on the Sacred Records, no approbation, express or implied, in precept or example, of a system which, when properly understood, can be regarded as a *justification* of American Slavery. And when we behold, flaming on the very portals of both the Old and the New Dispensation, the Law, “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself ;*” and hear from the lips of the Author and Finisher of our faith, the precept,—“*All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you,*

do ye even so to them ;" we cannot look upon Slavery, and we dare not speak of it, but as an essential, a complex, and a multifiform transgression of the plainest principles and precepts of religion.

We rejoice in the belief that there are, among slaveholders, those who conscientiously desire the removal of the system with all its inevitable evils : In relation to them, we would speak with the utmost tenderness. We would even hope that their action may be united with ours, for the accomplishment of so desirable an end.

We doubt not that many, among our enslaved countrymen, are treated, as far as the system will allow, with humanity and kindness. We speak not of individual cases either of kindness or of cruelty ;—but of the **SYSTEM** : and we affirm that, even in its mildest form, it is a system necessarily involving evils, the endurance of which we should regard as the greatest earthly calamity that could possibly befall ourselves or our children. We have only, in imagination, to assume the condition of the slave, to be subjected to the same bondage, with its inevitable ignorance and debasement, held perhaps to-day as the property of a humane master, but liable to fall to-morrow into the hands we know not of whom, and to be driven we know not whither,—our own will blotted out of being, and the indestructible affections of the heart rent and agonized by the sundering of the dearest family ties,—we have only, for one moment, to place ourselves, our wives, and our children, in circumstances like these, to see in what daring opposition the whole system stands to the second great command of the **LAW**, and to feel with what force the **Golden Rule** of Christ constrains us to exert what moral influence we may for its speedy and total removal.

We are perfectly aware that it is often said, and undoubtedly with truth,* that the slaves are content in their present situation. But this, so far from constituting a valid apology for Slavery, only shows how deep is the degradation to which it reduces its subjects. A human being, an immortal soul, made a little lower

* True to some extent, though by no means generally.—*Pub. Com.*

than the angels, content in a situation in which he necessarily takes rank with articles of merchandize !—nay, with the brute creation ! !—content for himself and his posterity ! ! !—satisfied with ignorance, and with a deprivation of the dearest rights and highest privileges which belong to humanity ! ! ! ! If this be not a monstrous absurdity, it can only be regarded as the very climax of this oppressive and debasing system, demonstrating to what an extent its influences may go, in crushing the powers and quenching the aspirations of a mind, formed for glory and honor and immortality. In this fact alone, we have evidence irresistible that Slavery ought to be abandoned, as utterly irreconcilable with that religion, which prompts to our own intellectual and moral cultivation, and to the most liberal exertions to promote the improvement of our fellow men.

If any thing more were necessary to deepen our convictions of the enormity of this evil, we have it in the declarations of impartial slaveholders themselves. It is the testimony of Jefferson, that “the whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it ; for man is an imitative animal. * * * The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to the worst of passions ; and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy, who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. * * * With the morals of the people, their industry is destroyed. For, in a warm climate, no man will labor for himself who can make another labor for him. * * And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people, that these liberties are the gift of God ?—that they are not to be violated but with his wrath ? Indeed, I tremble for my country, when I reflect that God is just ; that his justice cannot sleep forever.”

And if Slavery, on the one hand, encourages idleness, fosters the growth of the worst of passions, and furnishes temptation to the grossest immorality, we have testimony equally unexceptionable, that its effect, on the other, is to entail on vast multitudes a degree of religious degradation and hopelessness as deplorable as that of the Heathen. "Who would credit it," say the Committee of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia appointed Dec. 5, 1833,—“Who would credit it, that in these years of revival and benevolent effort, in this Christian Republic, there are OVER TWO MILLIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THE CONDITION OF HEATHEN, and, in some respects, in a worse condition. From long continued and close observation, we believe that their moral and religious condition is such, that they may justly be considered, THE HEATHEN OF THIS CHRISTIAN COUNTRY, and will *bear comparison* with *Heathen* in *any country in the world*. The Negroes are destitute of the Gospel, and *ever will be under the present state of things*. In the vast field extending from one entire State beyond (north of) the Potomac, to the Sabine River, and from the Atlantic to the Ohio, there are, to the best of our knowledge, *not twelve* men, exclusively devoted to the religious instruction of the Negroes. In the present state of feeling in the South, a ministry of their own color could neither be *obtained* nor *tolerated*.

“But do not the Negroes have access to the Gospel through the stated ministry of the Whites? We answer, No: the Negroes have no regular and efficient ministry;—as a matter of course, no churches; neither is there sufficient room in white churches for their accommodation. We know of but FIVE Churches in the Slaveholding States, built expressly for their use; these are all in the State of Georgia. We may now inquire, if they enjoy the privileges of the Gospel in their own houses and on our plantations? Again, we return a negative answer. They have NO BIBLES to read by their own firesides; they have no *family altars*; and, when in affliction or death, they have NO MINISTER to address to them the consolations of the Gospel, nor to bury the dead with solemn and appropriate

services." When, we listen to such testimony as this, and reflect on the appalling facts it discloses, we cannot refrain, as Ministers of Jesus Christ, from uniting in one loud and earnest note of remonstrance.

We, therefore, solemnly affirm our conviction, that the *enslaving of men*, the abrogation of the right of personal ownership, without which no other rights can exist, the reducing of a *rational being* to the condition of a *thing*, an article of merchandize, a machine of labor, to be bought, sold, held, and used at the will and for the benefit of another, is contrary alike to the plainest dictates of reason, and the inviolable principles of righteousness ; forbidden by that command, which is the key-stone of all social morality ; at war with the entire genius of the Christian religion ; and condemned as a high-handed offence against both God and man, by the united voice of nature and revelation. We hold it, as here defined, to be not only a *SIN* in itself, but also the occasion, the partner, and the parent of almost every species of sin that can be named. We fully believe, that in its legitimate, though we will not say *universal* operation, it acts as the patron of arrogance, the nurse of cruelty, an incitement to the worst of passions, and a pander to wanton licentiousness ; and that the exceptions which exist are to be ascribed altogether to counteracting causes. We also believe that, to uphold the system, the *reading* of the " Good tidings of great joy which *should be to ALL PEOPLE*," is virtually, and, in most instances, effectually denied to more than two millions of immortal beings, by those Statutes existing in the Slaveholding States generally, which forbid the instruction of the Slaves in the elementary principles of education ; thus harmonizing with that spirit of Popery, which takes away from the people the key of knowledge. And we believe, that the system, consigning this entire class of our fellow creatures, to the servitude of power, the debasement of ignorance, and, to a frightful extent, the pollution of lust, crushes in them the noblest attributes of humanity, and leaves them to sink down to all that is wretched and disgusting in the lowest forms of wickedness.

Believing Slavery, therefore, to be both a **SIN** in itself, and a prolific parent of Sin, we believe also in the **DUTY** of its *removal*, and that without delay. And because we believe in the *duty*, we believe likewise in the *safety* of the measure ; for under the government of God, “righteousness” has no tendency to subvert, but only to “exalt a nation.” In other words, we believe that the master ought, without delay, to cease holding the slave as *property*, and elevate him to the proper dignity of a *man* ; to treat him, not as a creature of inferior nature, doomed to unrequited toil ; but as a brother of the same great family, possessed of the same natural rights as himself ; to allow him the claims of justice ; and strenuously endeavor to effect such a change in his civil relations, as shall secure and guard by law his rights as a rational and social being. Thus only can a full compliance be yielded to the spirit of the Apostolic injunction—“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.”

We will only add, in conclusion, that we arrogate not to ourselves the right of *dictating* to other men’s consciences ; but simply seek to discharge those obligations which are urged upon us by our own. We wish to exert no other influence for the removal of Slavery, than that which shall emanate kindly and gently from the truths we utter ; and we believe none other need be exerted ; for where the truth prevails, there will be the spirit of the Lord ; and “where the spirit of the Lord is, there is **LIBERTY** !” We are aware that if Slavery is ever abolished, it will be “by the Masters themselves, and by no others. No others can effect it, nor is it desirable that they should, if they could. Emancipation, to be of any value to the Slave, must be the free, voluntary act of the Master, performed from a conviction of its propriety.” And it is our earnest prayer, that the period may not be remote, when he shall perceive the evils of the system in all their magnitude ; when he shall proclaim liberty to the captives, convert the sighs of the oppressed into songs of deliverance, and save a guilty land from the storm of divine retribution which is now suspended over it.

George Allen.

Joseph Allen.

David A. Grosvenor.

Samuel Henry.

Mason Ball.	Francis Horton.
Isaac R. Barbour.	Nelson B. Jones.
Horatio Bardwell.	James Kimball.
N. Beach.	David R. Lamson.
John Boardman.	Sumner Lincoln.
Caleb Brown.	Richard Livesey.
Samuel G. Buckingham.	Samuel May.
Michael Burdett.	Winthrop Morse.
W. S. Campbell.	John Nelson.
R. Carver.	Levi Packard.
Joseph S. Clark.	William P. Paine.
Josiah Clark.	Charles H. Peabody.
Elnathan Davis.	David Peabody.
Elijah Demond.	James Porter.
William Eaton.	William H. Richards.
C. B. Elliott.	William H. Sandford.
Brown Emerson.	C. Shumway.
Daniel H. Emerson.	Ethan Smith.
Jonathan L. Estey.	Thomas Snell.
James D. Farnsworth.	Micah Stone.
George Fisher.	Leonard Tracy.
John Fiske.	George Trask.
Charles Forbush.	Thomas W. Tucker.
Joseph Goffe.	George Waters.
George Goodyear.	John Wilde.
John Greene.	Moses Winch.
Cyrus P. Grosvenor.	Richard Woodruff.

REMONSTRANCE OF THE MINORITY.

WORCESTER, January 16, 1838.

Asserting, for every individual, the natural right and the Christian obligation of forming and expressing opinions on morals as applied to public affairs, and admitting purity of intention to those who constitute the majority of the body present, we, the undersigned, though we consider Slavery as a great moral evil, and devoutly pray that it may soon be removed from our country, yet would remonstrate against the combined action of the Clergy of the County upon questions connected with Slavery in the Southern States.

1st. Because it is the appropriate duty of the Christian Ministry to hold up the great principles of religious truth to dispassionate consideration, to assert the doctrines on which great moral reforms depend, and not to take the lead in political movements.

2d. Because the pastor, in advocating publicly either side of this disputed and highly exciting question, must give offence to a portion of his parishioners, and thereby lessen his usefulness as a Christian Minister.

3d. Because the organization of a party by the Clergy for a political purpose has a direct tendency to subject the purity of divine truth to the base influence of party spirit.

4th. Because, by narrowing the warfare against moral evil to a special and organized warfare against an evil in a remote, but well defined section of our country, the Clergy excite one portion of the country in opposition to the other, and threaten to dissolve the Union in the conflict of geographical parties.

5th. Because the questions connected with Slavery are so intimately blended with questions of state rights, and the construction of the National Constitution, that the organized action

of the **Clergy** upon **Slavery** will necessarily connect itself with our political elections, and judicial decisions, and will thus make the **Clergy** not the ambassadors of **Christ** and friends of peace, but the fomenters of social discord, and the abettors of fatal divisions.

6th. Because the organization of the **Clergy** to act on a political subject is without a precedent in our Commonwealth, and may prove an introduction to the most pernicious display of worldly ambition and spiritual domination.

Isaac Allen.

Aaron Bancroft.

Samuel Clarke.

Sewall S. Cutting.

Eber Carpenter.

David Holman.

Alonzo Hill.

Rodney A. Miller.

M. G. Pratt.

T. R. Sullivan.

Nathaniel Thayer.

Jonathan E. Woodbridge.